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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, January 31, 2005

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Jackson J. Benson Receives Library's 2005 LOLA Award *Former SDSU Professor is Award-Winning Biographer*

SAN DIEGO – Author, editor and retired professor Jackson J. Benson received the City of San Diego Public Library's 2005 Local Author Lifetime Achievement (LOLA) Award at a special reception at the Central Library on Jan. 29. The award is presented annually to a writer who has a distinguished writing career and whose work has provided significant enrichment to the San Diego community.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Dr. Benson graduated from Stanford University and received M.A. from San Francisco State University and his Ph.D from the University of Southern California. From 1966 to 1997 he served as professor of English and comparative literature at San Diego State University, where he taught 20th century American literature.

Twice a fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities, he has written or edited 15 books on modern American literature. Among them are the authorized biography, "The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer" (1984), which received the PEN-WEST USA Award for nonfiction; and the authorized biography, "Wallace Stegner" His Life and Work" (1996), which won the David Woolley and Beatrice Cannon Evans Biography Award. He also co-edited the collection marking the centennial of John Steinbeck's birth, "American and Americans and Selected Nonfiction (2002). Dr. Benson's most recent book, "The Ox-Bow Man: A Biography of Walter Van Tilburg Clark" (2004) received the Wilbur S. Shepperson Book Award.

A third generation Californian, he divides his time between a home in La Mesa and a cabin in the northern Sierra Nevada. He is married to Sue Ellen Benson, a middle school teacher with the San Diego Unified School District for 25 years.

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